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THE
NATURE AND IMPORTANCE
OF
RESIGNATION:
A SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE
CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH
DISPLAYED IN THE PEACEFUL DEPARTURE

OF
MRS. SIZER,

OF WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK;

Who died the 1st February, 1797, in the 27th Year of her Age.

BY SAMUEL LOWELL.

What tho' short thy date!
VIRTUE, not rolling Suns, the Mind matures.
That Life is long which answers Life's great End.
YOUNG.

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DECLARATION



ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Discourse would never have issued from the Press, but for the earnest solicitation of the mournful partner of the amiable woman by whose death it was occasioned. The writer was fearful that a positive denial might give additional pain, to a mind but slightly healed from its late affecting wound. He has, therefore, suffered his own opinion to give place to the tender emotions of an afflicted friend, the sincerity of whose affection for a deceased wife has induced him to request that her virtues may be known beyond the circle of her acquaintance, and her memory be perpetuated when those who enjoyed her friendship shall also become inhabitants of *the House appointed for all living*. It is hoped this will be thought a sufficient apology for the public appearance of a plain sermon, of which no one can think more humbly than its Author.

ADVERTISEMENT

THE DUBLIN SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE
HUMANITY, have the honor to announce
that they have received from the
LONDON SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE
HUMANITY, a copy of the
REPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR 1840
AND 1841, which they are now
circulating among the members of the
SOCIETY, and are desirous to see
it in the hands of every member of the
SOCIETY, and of every person who
is interested in the cause of
HUMANITY.

SERMON,

Ec. Ec.

I AM requested at this time to attempt a few useful reflections, from the affecting circumstance of the death of our late friend Mrs. SIZER.

I comply with this wish with the greater degree of readiness, from the comfortable persuasion I have, that, *her end was PEACE*; and I am confident that I cannot wish you, my dear friends, a greater blessing, than by praying, as I sincerely do, that your latter end may be like hers. The design, however, of funeral discourses, is not to sound the praises of the dead, but to remind the living of their own mortality. Nevertheless, I think it can never be improper to hold up examples of superior piety as patterns for imitation, and so to exhort our hearers to *be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

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If at any time we can inform you of a particular instance, wherein the timidity of the doubtful has been done away; and from what we have seen and heard from our dying friends, can assure you of their minds being divinely supported in the extreme moment, we may by this means become instrumental in *strengthening the weak hands, and confirming the feeble knees.*

The passage of Scripture which I have selected for this occasion, you will find recorded,

LUKE XXII. 42.

NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE.

Such, you know, was the language adopted by *Jesus Christ*, the great friend of sinners, when in his agony in the garden *he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows*, and when (as it is here expressed) *his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground*.*

* Many Expositors have thought, as Mr. Le Clerc did, that this expression only implies that his *drops of sweat* were large and clammy like clots of gore: but Dr. Whitby observes, that *Aristotle* and *Diodorus Siculus* both mention bloody sweats as attending some extraordinary agony of mind; and *Leti*, in his *Life of Pope Sixtus V.* (page 200) and
Sir

In making choice of a portion of the sacred word suited to the present solemnity, three considerations induced me to give preference to the passage I have read; and these reasons may serve as the outline of our discourse.

FIRST. I have conceived it proper to remind you of the cheerful submission of THE SON OF MAN to the sufferings which he so voluntarily endured, because we are about to commemorate his death, in that ordinance which he himself hath so expressly instituted for that sacred purpose^{*}.

SECONDLY. I consider the resignation of *Jesus Christ*, under his tremendous sufferings, as an example for our imitation, especially under the severer trials of life: And,

LASTLY. I have made choice of the text, because it is so happily expressive of that tranquil submission, which our departed friend was enabled, under her painful afflic-

Sir John Chardin, in his History of Persia (vol. I. page 126) mention a like phenomenon; to which Dr. Jackson (in his works, vol. II. page 819) adds another from Thuanus, lib. X. page 221.

See Dr. Doddridge's Note on the passage in his Family Expositor.

* The Lord's Supper was administered immediately after the delivery of the Sermon.

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tion, to exercise. We who visited her know, that all her conduct, and all her language, was in unison with these words; NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE.

Our subject is RESIGNATION TO THE DIVINE PROCEDURE; and in the

FIRST place we remark, that *Jesus Christ* most strikingly illustrated that patient acquiescence in the will of God, which we affectionately wish to recommend to you. It would lead us too far from the principal object of this address, even to mention the various instances wherein his peaceful submission to the counsels of his heavenly Father was manifest. We may, however, observe, that when the covenant of grace was formed, he with cheerfulness submitted to the proposal of suffering the divine will. The grand condition of that sacred compact was, that *He should be wounded for our transgressions, that he should be bruised for our iniquities; that the chastisement of our peace should be upon him, and that by his stripes we should be healed.* The promise annexed to the fulfilment of the condition thus imposed, of making his soul an offering for sin, was this; *He shall see of the travail of his soul*

soul and be satisfied. In this awful work he voluntarily engaged. It was not proposed with more affection than it was acceded to; for, without a shadow of compulsion he said, *Lo! I come to do thy will, O my God!—Yea, thy law is within my heart.* Well did the Saviour know what it would cost him to redeem transgressors, nevertheless, *He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

Through the whole of his life he discovered a mind most perfectly resigned to every circumstance of sorrow. Frequently did he allude to, and in part describe, the tragical catastrophe by which his life was to be taken away, saying, *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up.* He even knew who would give him into the hands of his enemies, long before we have any reason for believing such an intention was formed in the mind of Judas; *For he knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.* It was a subject upon which his thoughts manifestly dwelt, and it was contemplated by him under those

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impressions

impressions which constitute a perfect pattern of submission to the will of God.

His resignation was most remarkably displayed in the close of life, and always keeping pace with the increase of his sufferings, strikingly exhibited his heavenly character. When he went up to *Jerusalem*, he knew he was about to *suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and to be killed*; nevertheless, he entered the city, not with the marks of despondency, but rather with the ensigns of joy and gladness. *For the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.* This was a strong indication that he considered the way to Calvary, as the road to immortal honour.—Yes, my brethren, it was upon the cross that *He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them.* Not that we are to suppose he could ever be insensible to the deluge of evil which was rolling towards him; so far was this from being the case, that it appears he anticipated his sufferings with
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the most tender emotions of spirit. Witness the language of his address to Heaven. *Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour? nay, but for this cause came I unto this hour*.*

Never did he appear reluctant in his submission; on the contrary, when Judas was resolved upon treachery he well knew it; *He said unto him, That thou doest do quickly:* and when Peter would have defended him from the brutal ruffians who arrested him, he sharply reprov'd him, and strictly commanded that he should desist from violence. In a word, with the utmost consistency and perseverance he said, **THE CUP WHICH MY FATHER GIVETH ME, SHALL I NOT DRINK IT?**

It was *necessary* that the sufferings of *Jesus Christ* should be *voluntary*, otherwise the great end proposed by them could never have been accomplished. They who deny the vicarious sufferings of the Saviour, remark, that "It is contrary to equity, that

* The usual punctuation of this passage greatly obscures it. As it is here pointed, it appears to me, not merely *intelligible*, but perfectly *easy*.

the innocent should endure the punishment which is alone due to the guilty:" and this would certainly be a very forcible objection against the doctrine to which we now refer, if we had it not in our power to reply, that His engagements, as our surety, were all without compulsion; and when *it pleased the LORD to bruise him*, it was with his own acquiescence; *for in the plainest terms he declared to the people, that no man took his life from him, but that he laid it down of himself.* Be it therefore known unto you, men and brethren, CHRIST hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to GOD; and while he sustained the stroke he said, NOT MY WILL BUT THINE BE DONE. We proceed,

SECONDLY, to consider the resignation of *Jesus Christ*, as an example for our imitation, especially under the severer trials of life.

The grace we now recommend, like every other excellency, has its counterfeits, which renders it necessary for us to remark, that it does not consist in that stoical insensibility which is sometimes mistaken for it, but which is contrary to the design of God, and the very constitution of our nature. It would
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be an unjust reflection upon christianity, to suppose, that it ever blunts the innocent sensations of the mind; on the contrary, it sets the finest edge upon the feelings of the human heart that it can possibly receive. From the conduct of our Saviour it appears, that a very *affecting sense* of our sufferings is consistent with resignation; for under the greatness of the pressure he prayed, saying, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me.* That is, "Were it consistent with thy eternal counsels, relating to thy glory, and the salvation of thy people, I should be glad to escape that which now presents itself; nevertheless, I freely bow, and submit to thy disposal, renouncing all the will of the flesh, and desiring that not this will of mine, but that thy most holy will may be done, whatsoever it may cost me." Some philosophers have proudly said, if *their* instructions were attended to, mankind would be effectually fortified against all the war of contending passions. Even if this vain boast were true, it proceeds upon a principle which supposes the heart destitute of every spring of piety and tenderness. Sensibility of mind, under
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the events of adversity, has ever been one of the characteristics of a good man.

When intelligence was brought to David, respecting the death of his son, every tender feeling was instantly in exercise. A stranger to the unnatural refinement which makes an excellency of hardness of heart, he gave vent to the empassioned emotions of his soul. *He went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom!—my son, my son Absalom!—would God I had died for thee;—O Absalom my son, my son!* When Lazarus died, some of the sympathetic Jews made a visit to his family, with the kind intention of taking part in the sorrows which the bereavement occasioned in the minds of *Martha and Mary*, and to comfort them concerning their brother.

And when these benevolent visitors observed the abrupt manner in which Mary went out, they did not so much as notice the want of decorum to which her sorrow gave birth, but knowing her feelings, said among themselves, *she goeth unto the grave, to weep there.* When Jesus saw that she was so overcome with grief, his mind instantly partook
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of the melting and painful ideas by which she was agitated; nor did even *he* repress the tear of sympathy; *he groaned in spirit, was troubled, and wept.*

But though resignation will comport with the tenderest feelings, it is possible for sorrow to exceed the boundaries which reason suggests, and which Christianity prescribes. When our fond desires are crossed, and we are wounded in a part too tender for language to particularize; we are then in eminent danger of an excess of sorrow. This is sometimes occasioned by contemplating the affliction with every circumstance of poignancy, without attending to what is fitted to alleviate.

Perhaps the loss we sustain, not only appears irreparable, but we suppose there is a singularity in our case, and that the trial is brought upon us at a time when we are least able to sustain the shock. The affliction of Job was confessedly great, but his sorrow exceeded, and he spake unadvisedly with his lips when he said, *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night wherein it was said, there is a man child conceived.* When he continued to exclaim, *Let that day be darkness,*

*ness, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. To dwell only upon that which occasions our grief, without attending to the circumstances which are calculated to sooth, is like contemplating an object in a wrong position, or by an improper light. If it is placed at too great a distance, the intervening space forbids a minute examination. If it is brought too near, its beauties are concealed, or seen with difficulty. Place it on the right hand, and the glare of light dazzles and perplexes;—and on the left the shade obscures. But let the object be placed at a proper distance, and irradiated with a just proportion of light, and that which before appeared as deformity or confusion, we now without hesitation pronounce VERY GOOD. This illustration you know, without my assistance, how to apply. In contemplating the divine procedure, no tumultuous passion should be permitted to obtrude, it becomes us to remember, that the understanding of Jehovah is infinite, and that *all his paths are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies.* A present occurrence may be too much for our investigation, but let us be patient, and wait the*

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the end; when by the light shining out of obscurity, we shall understand that which at present is incomprehensible; and when we shall pronounce *that* an act of tender compassion, which our unbelief would *now* suggest to be an instance of severity. In a word, under the reprehensions of Providence, the extremes of insensibility and excessive sorrow, must be carefully avoided; and these extremes we are cautioned against in the holy Scriptures: *My son, DESPISE not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor FAINT when thou art rebuked of him.*

In the time of trial, if the grace of resignation has its proper influence upon the mind, the severest afflictions are approved as good;—the will submits to that which the understanding testifies is under the direction of infinite wisdom; and the affections which have been placed upon the divine Being are not impaired. Let us spend a moment upon each of these particulars in their order.

In the *first* place we say, where genuine resignation exists, the understanding approves the severest dispensations of Providence, as events which must necessarily be good. It will frequently happen, that the painful
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things by which we are assailed, will be so enveloped in mystery, as to elude every attempt of ours to guess at the end to which they are ultimately directed; but a wise and good man will not draw conclusions from the appearances of a day, but will open his thoughts to the great system of things, the whole of which is under the direction of that infinite Intelligence, whose way is in the whirlwind and in the storm, who sees the end from the beginning, who *hath prepared his throne in the Heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over all.* We may be exercised with mysterious dispensations, which we may be so far from living to see explained in this world, that a succession of events may arise even to the close of life, which will only serve to condense the cloud, and convert the present gloom into thicker darkness. When, therefore, we contemplate the ways of God, let not our thoughts be bounded by time or space, but let us labour to penetrate the vail, and look into eternity, where the mind will no longer be obstructed in its enquiries by the mists of ignorance, but from a comprehensive view of the divine order, will *ascribe wisdom, and power, and honour, unto HIM*
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that sitteth upon the THRONE for ever and ever. In the economy of Providence there is a chain which cannot be broken. It is disposed in a complicated form, but every link is placed by infinite wisdom, occupies a station which is connected with the accomplishment of infinite designs, and the smallest part can never be removed, but at the expence of deranging the whole. Under a persuasion of the goodness of even the severest occurrences, *Hezekiah* discovered a tranquil mind, when the prophet was sent to him with heavy tidings. In this manner was *Isaiah* commissioned to address the king: *All that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; and thy sons shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.* To which *Hezekiah* meekly replied, *Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken.* It is plain he considered it a just correction of the pride in which the punishment originated, and that whatever the All-wise saw meet to bring to pass, must be indispensibly right. It is a misapprehension of God's design which begets impa-

tience; and though even to a good man *his ways are past finding out*, a settled conviction of the equity and benevolence of his conduct, has the most happy tendency to prevent the language of complaint.

In the *second* place we remark, that resignation teaches the *will* to submit to that which the *understanding* testifies is under the direction of wisdom. If we for a moment look back to our own experience, we shall immediately be convinced, how possible it is to be theoretically convinced of the purity and goodness of the divine procedure, while, at the same time, the will may not becomingly submit to a present affliction. The human will is naturally impatient of opposition. A grand design of a principle of grace being implanted in the mind, is to reduce this faculty to a state of holy obedience;—it necessarily follows, the greater our submission is, the more evident will it become to ourselves as well as to others, that we are under the influence of *that wisdom which cometh from above*. Providence is almost daily bringing to pass some lesser things, which we should not be inclined to choose;

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in all these we have opportunities of exercising that *meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.*

It is, however, under the more afflictive circumstances of life, that this grace is especially necessary, and shines with peculiar lustre. Is our health exchanged for sickness?—or our ease for pain?—Are our former possessions transferred to other hands?—Are we bereaved of those in whose lives our happiness was bound up?—and has the voice from Heaven said, *Son of man, behold, I take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke?* It also says, *Be still, and know that I am God;*—and Christian resignation teaches us to reply, *Not my will, but thine be done.*

One of the most striking instances of submission contained in the Scriptures, is that which is recorded respecting the conduct of *David*, when he fled from *Jerusalem*, in consequence of the rebellion of *Abshalom*.—It was a time of great public distress, inasmuch that *all the country wept with a loud voice.* When he departed *he went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot; and all the people that were with him covered every*

every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went. And when he saw the Levites bearing the ark, the king said unto Zadok, carry back the ark of God into the city; if I shall find favour in the eye of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; BEHOLD, HERE I AM, LET HIM DO TO ME AS SEEMETH GOOD IN HIS SIGHT.

Blessed example of resignation to the divine conduct! His son had already violated all the ties of nature;—was now at the head of an army of rebels;—had actually, by foul and unnatural murder, taken his brother's life;—and was at this moment thirsting for the blood of his father. "Well," said the afflicted sufferer, "if God permits him, after all, to usurp the throne, and even to rob me of my life, I will not repine against his providence; which, though mysterious, cannot be otherwise than equitable and benevolent: *Behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good in his sight.*"

In the time of affliction, a man of resignation reasons thus with himself:—"Though my mental powers are too weak to investigate

gate the designs of God in the present dispensation, I will quietly submit to his disposal, who would not thus exercise me, unless it were expedient, for *he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* Perhaps by taking my earthly comforts, he means to put me more fully into the possession of those which are heavenly; and though he hedges my way with thorns and briars, the kindness of the intention may be, to prevent my wandering from the path of life. At all events, *it is the LORD, therefore let him do what seemeth him good.*"

Our last remark is, that if the soul is properly resigned, the affections which have been placed upon God, are not impaired by afflictive Providences. Even an irreligious man, in a time of ease and prosperity, may feel some flashes of affection towards the Almighty;—the corn, and the wine, and the oil are increased, and he feels joy and gladness. Stimulated by no higher motives than those of self-love, when his wishes are no longer gratified, this semblance of virtue vanishes, the murmurs of ingratitude are heard, and *his heart fretteth against the LORD.* Not so the man, whose peaceful submission

submission is that of which we speak. His love originates in that purity of mind with which its great Author hath inspired him, it reigns in his heart as a predominant principle, and can never become subject to a motive inferior to itself. In a time of adversity, his natural inclinations are not indulged, as at other seasons, but this circumstance does not, with him, afford a single argument for the diminution of his love. He considers affliction as he does a medicine; which is not designed to gratify his taste, but to improve his health. A man does not esteem his *physician* less, because his prescription is not palatable; and if his *surgeon* perform even a painful operation, the hope of its being attended with salutary effects, will rather increase than diminish his attachment. Thus the good man in a time of affliction, finds his heart still affectionately bound to the great Author of all his mercies, and feelingly adopts the sentiment of the prophet; *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall:*
yet

*yet will I rejoice in the LORD, I will joy
in the GOD of my salvation.*

“ Good when he gives, supremely good ;

“ Nor less when he denies ;

“ E’en crosses from his sov’ reign hand,

“ Are blessings in disguise.”

Two or three thoughts which, under the divine blessing, may assist you in exercising the duty of resignation, shall finish this part of our discourse.

Let us never forget, that the sovereign Disposer of events is *holy in all his works, and righteous in all his ways*. When he deprives us of our earthly comforts, *there is no unrighteousness with him*, because our sins have occasioned the forfeiture of every favour.

Impatience under our trials, is a tacit reflection upon the equity of the Almighty. If then tumultuous thoughts arise, and our minds begin to be agitated with irregular passions, let us remember, that we are violaters of that law which affixes the just and awful penalty of death to transgression, and that *it is of his mercies that we are not consumed*. Such were the sentiments adopted

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by pious *Ezra*, in a day of visitation; who instead of fostering a spirit of rebellious discontent, said, *After all that is come upon us, our God hath punished us less than our iniquities deserve.* Let us learn to adopt the same temper of penitent submission; and then, under the severest trials, our language will be, *Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?*

Even if there were nothing sinful in our opposition to the divine conduct, every thing like resistance directed against omnipotence, must be the most extravagant folly of which the human heart can be capable. If we contend the subject is, whether the divine will or ours shall yield. Ah! my brethren! *there are many devices in a man's heart;* and if there were ten thousand times more, *the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.*

Moreover, we should remember, that the Scriptures instruct us in the belief of the doctrine of paternal love being exercised in the sufferings which we are called to endure. *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* He is the Father of our spirits; which relation implies

implies love to our souls, and that he will maintain inviolate, though it should be at the expence of our outward comforts. Such is his benevolence, that if the indulgence of our wishes would comport with our best interest, most readily would he gratify our desires; for having *spared not his own Son, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Every affliction is designed to promote the spiritual happiness of a real Christian. The holy apostle *Paul* was a high favourite of Heaven; nevertheless, he was at the same time a man whose trials were greatly multiplied; *a thorn in the flesh was given unto him, a messenger of satan sent to buffet him;* and though in the day of his distress he cried to God for deliverance, his prayers (at least for a season) remained unanswered. For a time, this circumstance was all obscurity; but the good man lived to comprehend it, and saw that it was kindly permitted, *lest he should be exalted above measure.* If then the loss of our temporal comforts should become the means of improving our humility, and so of increasing our conformity to *Jesus Christ*; surely a pious

man can never contemplate such an event as matter of complaint, but will rather esteem *the trial of his faith, much more precious than gold which perisheth.*

Permit me also to suggest, that in a time of adversity, the various indulgencies with which we are favoured, should be remembered, as well as the evils we are called to endure. Under the most afflictive circumstances, a pious mind will discover a thousand comforts interwoven with its pains; and while these excite, as surely they should, his thankfulness, he will more than half forget his sorrows. Moreover, it is well to compare our situation with that of others, whose distress exceeds our own. Some are crushed under the galling yoke of poverty. Others by disease are groaning with excruciating pains. Multitudes are suffering the unknown calamities of bondage and banishment. And thousands are bleeding, and dying, beneath the complicated evils of war.

“ How groaning hospitals eject their dead !

“ What numbers groan for sad admission there !

“ What numbers, once in *Fortune's* lap high-fed,

“ Solicit the cold hand of Charity !

“ To shock us more, solicit it in vain !”

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From each of these, let us learn a lesson of gratitude to him who hath ordained our lot, that amidst our lighter afflictions we may never be indisposed to say, *blesſ the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits.*

Suffer me to add, that prayer in a time of trial, is that wherein the mind may expect ſupport, and is a means moſt happily calculated to promote ſubmiſſion. *Is any among you afflicted! let him pray.* To the Father of our mercies we may unbosom all our ſorrows, with the moſt certain confidence of meeting with the tenderest compaſſion; for *he will regard the prayer of the deſtitute, and not deſpiſe their ſupplication.* When the relief we promiſe ourſelves from ſublunary objects fails; when the kindeſt intentions and ſervices of friends can do but little towards the alleviation of our painful feelings; in the exerciſe of devotion, the children of God may look for that which ſhall enable them to ſay, *As our ſufferings abound, our conſolation alſo aboundeth.* It was in theſe exerciſes, that the pious Pſalmiſt imbibed that ſpirit which led him to ſay, *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; becauſe thou didſt it.* May you, my dear friends, under
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similar impressions, learn to say, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE. Which brings us,

○ LASTLY, To consider the text as happily expressive of that tranquil submission, which our departed friend was enabled, under her painful affliction, to exercise. With the most serene composure, consistency, and perseverance, she said, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE.

I understand, that the propriety and circumspection of her conduct through life, would have given her a stronger claim to a distinguished place amongst the moral and the virtuous, than can be assumed by most. Of these excellencies every one seemed sensible except herself. Her mind being effectually humbled by divine grace, a deep consciousness of sin was productive of every self-abasing expression. Her penitent language did not proceed from *habit*, but was uttered with that tender emotion which evidently declared it—the genuine effusion of a contrite spirit. Her views of the Gospel being regulated by truth, yielded a source of consolation, which proved an effectual reply to all that fear could suggest. The very name
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of the Saviour filled her with joy and gladness. She had many of those tender ties which twine about the human heart; the tenderest of all but newly formed*; and if life had been spared, had a fair prospect of worldly felicity. After enumerating present enjoyments, and adding thereto the high probability of future temporal happiness, in my hearing, she thus expressed herself: *I can now resign them ALL for the superior love I bear to my dear SAVIOUR.*

Though her affliction was long and painful, she was a stranger to the language of impatience; and there is great reason for believing, that from first to last, her lips never uttered a sentence of complaint. The burden of her theme was, *I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever.*

She, however, experienced intervals of gloom and comparative darkness; but the bright beams of the sun of Righteousness again penetrated and dispelled the clouds, and she rejoiced in the light of the countenance of the Lord. As she approached the last scene, her fears declined, and every spring

* Mr. and Mrs. Sizer had not been married quite six months at the time of her decease.

of hope was sweetly invigorated. Repeatedly did she say, *I have a desire to depart, and to be with CHRIST, which is far better.* Upon hearing several carriages pass in their way to the assembly, she said, *How much happier am I upon this bed of affliction, than they can possibly be in the pursuit of vanity!* Two or three days before her departure, upon her sisters' entering the room, perceiving the tenderness of their affection, she thus addressed them, *Why do you come to me with weeping eyes? I am sure you ought to come with joyful countenances and gladness of heart.* With her husband she expostulated, saying, *Why all this gloom, when my heavenly Father is welcoming me to my everlasting rest?*

She possessed (as many of you know) great sensibility of mind, and delicacy of affection; but before her spirit took its flight, she calmly declared, *If I could obtain all the pleasures of this world, and secure a continuance of life with my dear relatives, I would not forego the prospect which now presents itself, for them all!* When unable any longer to converse, her broken sentences, and the weak expiring efforts of departing nature, bespoke the tranquillity and holy triumph of her mind.

Before

Before the last remaining spark of life expired, the vital principle received a momentary supply, by which she was enabled to leave the world with the language of victory and heaven upon her lips; and thus she entered into the joy of her Lord. Nothing could be easier than to enlarge upon that excellency of spirit which she invariably manifested; but the leading trait in her character was that calm, placid, rational submission to the divine will, which proceeds from a conviction of the wisdom of God, and an interest in his love through Jesus Christ. It was an inscription written upon all her conduct, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE.

It may not be improper to remark, to such of you as are strangers in this assembly, that you are not to consider this as a panegyric pronounced upon one of our own society, or that what has been advanced originates in a partiality which such a circumstance might have occasioned. Our deceased friend was not of this congregation; and though it is certainly true that she had formed an intention of uniting with us in future, she considered herself a member of the established

lished church. Whatever her views upon that subject might be, no trace or shadow of doubt is upon my mind, of her being one of those *whose death is precious in the sight of the LORD.*

Resignation, like every other christian grace, has its origin in divine influence. Let it then be our serious concern to look up to him who, by the operations of his holy Spirit, can alone subdue our wills, and dispose us to acquiesce in all his dispensations. Our present, as well as our future felicity, is connected with such submission.

No circumstances in life can possibly secure us from calamity; it follows, therefore, that our happiness will always be in proportion to our resignation. May God inspire us with this holy, happy virtue, that through life, and in death, we may be divinely assisted in saying, *NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE.*

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